episcopal church

The Diocese of Pennsylvania

CHURCH HOUSE
Suite 1600, 1700 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103
LOcust 7-6650

THE RT. REV. LYMAN C. OGILBY

July 24, 1974

My Brothers in Christ, Bishops Corrigan, DeWitt, and Welles:

As you know, I have supported the ordination of women to the priesthood and to the episcopate, and I have recently made known my position with regard to the projected ordination of several women deacons to the priesthood. I consulted and conferred with the Chancellor and the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Pennsylvania on July 24. I have been advised to write this letter to you, with a carbon copy for the Reverend Suzanne R. Hiatt.

I need not call to your attention the fact that, since you have not had my consent to the proposed ordination, your participation in that service would be in violation of Article II, Sec. 3 of the Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church. I have no canonical authority to prevent the proposed ordination. I do not propose to invoke civil intervention as I feel this is a matter to be resolved within our church. However, I will personally have to deal with the effect of any such ordination as to the Reverend Suzanne R. Hiatt of this diocese who has not been certified for ordination to the priesthood by the Standing Committee as required by Canon, and has not had my approval to be ordained in the manner which you propose.

In this regard, I have concluded that, in the event you proceed with the proposed ordination, I will immediately require of the Reverend Suzanne R. Hiatt her assurance that, until her status is clarified, she will refrain from exercising priestly duties, or, if she refuses, I will initiate action to suspend her in accordance with Title IV of the National Canons until after the meeting of the House of Bishops this coming October, or until such later time as her status shall have been clarified.

Faithfully,

Bishop of Pennsylvania

LCO/jj

cc: The Rev. Suzanne R. Hiatt